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ABSTRACT

This paper describes methods and a pilot program for developing coalitions that support global education at the local school system level. Guidelines are suggested for using international exchange students as resource persons in the classroom and for ways to show hospitality to international visitors. An attached student handout describes exchange problems in terms of stereotyping, inaccurate information, over simplification, and cultural bias. Drawings and photographs are included. (JHP)

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RESOURCE EXCHANGE: LINKING LOCAL SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

PEACE & GLOBAL STUDIES

BY

JOAN K. REYNOLDS

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Experiment in International Living-
School for International Training
Kipling Road
Brattleboro, VT 05301

RESOURCE EXCHANGE: linking local school communities through Peace & Global Studies

General Theme catagory: Models of state or local collaboration.

Purpose of Forum catagories: Encourage development of coalitions in support of global education initiatives at the local level; Increase the cooperation and articulation between precollegiate and collegiate education.

Project: PEACE & GLOBAL STUDIES RESOURCE EXCHANGE SERVICE

The Poster Board presentation describes a feasibility pilot project set up to organize and implement a coordinated service linking the local area schools with the School for International Training through an exchange of "goods & services".

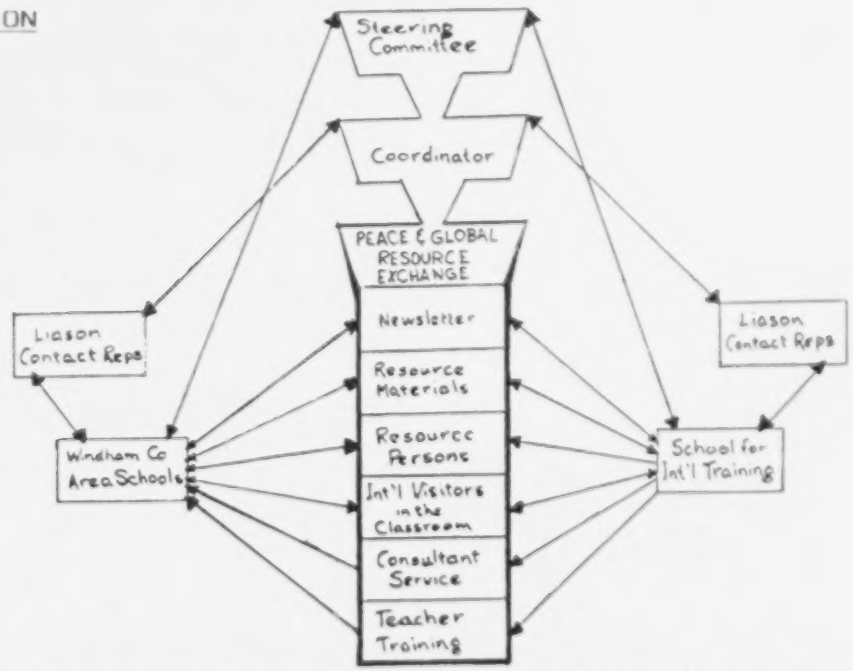
Educators have need to discover available resources in order to integrate a global perspective into curriculum studies to enable students to become contributing world citizens in our internationally interdependent world. Collections of quality peace & global studies resources are available, just waiting to be tapped at peace & global studies centers scattered throughout the country, involved in the development and dispersement of curriculum materials, some serving as reliable clearing houses. And, there are increasingly more international visitors and students living within the U.S. available to serve as resource persons.

Discovering ways and means to make these resources easily accessible (exchange service) and effectively useable (consultant service and/or teacher training), alleviating the teacher load,

is the present primary purpose of the coordinated exchange service we have initiated. It is our hope that in sharing this project it may serve as a model for other communities, enabling them to attempt similar local projects in accordance with their own resources and needs.

PEACE & GLOBAL RESOURCE EXCHANGE
Windham County Area Schools School for Int'l Training
Six Month Feasibility Pilot Project
Long Term Goal: Permanent Coordinated Exchange Service

ORGANIZATION



SERVICES

* Monthly calendar of events including planned activities in the area of peace & global studies sponsored by local community organizations, SIT, and local schools, with pertinent up-dates-in-between.

* Accessible cross referenced computer data base files of multi-cultual human and material resources available through SIT, the local schools and the Brattleboro community.

* Accessible cross referenced computer data base files of sources from where to obtain additional info and resources concerning peace & global studies.

* Contact and coordination in making arrangements for scheduling and securing teacher requested services for the classroom and schools, which includes facilitation of international visitors in the classroom.

* Opportunities for teacher training in peace & global studies based upon felt need of teachers served, w\rerertification credit.

* Consultant services in presenting and/or creating peace & global studies curriculum materials and activities for students.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Resource Service is supported by the school communities it serves, plus outside grant monies.

Local Area Schools: (per bldg)

Membership $200.00 minimum commitment
- newsletter & up-dates
- access to materials check-out first preference
- facilitation of student exchanges
- consultant services
- teacher training (available teacher slots per member school determined in accordance to situation of each individual workshop session offered)
- access to free use of film collection

Non-member Fee Base
- $25.00 subscription newsletter & up-dates
  access to material check-out
  facilitation of student exchanges
- $10.00 per participant per teacher training session
- $10.00-$25.00 per participant in accordance to consultant service hours
- $3.00-$5.00 per film

School for Int'l Training:

Tapped $ pool set aside for Peace Projects

INTERNATIONAL VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM
TEACHER GUIDE

Before

* Determine, with your students, the purpose of the proposed visit from the international visitor(s). Consider the visitor(s) a source of enrichment above and beyond what you, as teacher, could present to your class.

* Make your request and arrangements two weeks in advance if at all possible.

* Determine a workable time frame. Time allotted for a "sit and listen presentation" should be carefully geared to the attention span of students involved. A half hour maximum is advisable. Interaction time with the visitor(s) is often the most meaningful activity, so portion time accordingly. Planning with your students is important.

* Acquaint yourself and your students with the culture(s) represented by your international visitor(s) - geography, customs, physical appearance - stressing similarities shared, as well as differences. Help students to realize how it might feel to be in the position of the visitor, and the part they can play in making the visitor feel comfortable and welcome. Time taken for thought and discussion about ethnic heritage, and to identify their own, will promote cultural awareness in preparation for a more meaningful exchange.

* Involve your students directly, engaging them in the prior contact with the visitor(s), and the planning of what will take place during the time of the visit. An appointed/self selected "host committee in charge" provides a valuable learning experience for students. A list of questions, compiled by students and given to the visitor(s) beforehand is sometimes helpful. Offer the responsibility of introducing the speaker to a willing student. The more student involvement, the greater guarantee of effective interaction and attention during the time of the actual visit. Students of all ages are capable of carrying out this kind of responsibility, with your help.

* Arrange the physical setting so that all, especially the visitor, will feel comfortable. A circular/semi-circular chair arrangement encourages mutual sharing. A table or desk top to lean on offers security for the one addressing the class. Offer several suggestions, complying with visitor's request when possible. Be clear as to what the visitor needs in terms of AV equipment, space, and materials. Consider that a visitor may rather not dress in native costume, which sets her/him apart.

* If at all posible after visitor(s)' arrival, allow time for orientation before the presentation, offering the visitor(s) a look-see at the situation - a walk around the classroom with student guide(s), introduction to other teacher/administrators, individual contact with students, etc.

During

* ENJOY! Be present - a guide on the side, an observer in the wings. What transpires may be valuable for meaningful reference and/or application immediately following or later on.

After

Immediate

* An open discussion of what was learned/enjoyed/felt/shared helps to facilitate development in awareness - looking through another's eyes. Opportunity for such a discussion acts as an aid to assimilation of all that took place, serving as a tool for effective evaluation of goals met, purpose carried out, objectives achieved, and improvements needed for the "next time".

* Thank you letters are now in order. Reference to specifics is most appreciated - "I liked it when you ....." It surprised me to learn that ....."

Long Term

* Continue to make connections afterwards, making applicable reference to the experience during classroom activities throughout the year.

Effective Ways to Engage the International Visitor

* Traditional music - singing and dancing with students
* Traditional food - cooking and eating with students
* Traditional clothing - bringing clothing that students may try on
* Traditional sports and games - playing with students
* Traditional arts and crafts - instructing students in creating individual "works of art"
* Cultural Traditions - conducting a simulation with students
* Language - demonstrating/teaching writing and speaking
* Linguistics - discussing origin of language, its relation to the culture and/or other languages
* Comparative study - sharing similarities and differences
* Families and Homes - exchange sharing of photos
* Addressing questions to the students in the class

Images of Other Countries and Cultures

STUDENT HANDOUT 1A

Most of us have at least a vague idea of what life is like in other countries such as Japan, Brazil, India, or the Soviet Union. But most often these images we have of other countries and cultures are not very accurate. Some of the mistakes we often make in forming our conceptions of other nations are summarized below:

Problem One: Stereotyping

In printing, a *stereotype* is a metal plate used to reproduce the same picture over and over. In thinking, a *stereotype* is a mental picture applied over and over to all members of a particular group. A person who stereotypes thinks all individuals in a group fit one pattern. Stereotypes distort our thinking because they don't take into account the fact that all human beings are different. Of course, it is impossible to have information about each individual person in the world; some generalizations are necessary. However, it should be remembered that all nations contain different types of people. Care must be taken never to judge *all* Arabs, Russians, Germans, Chinese, etc. as stupid or intelligent, lazy or hardworking, honest or dishonest.

Example of stereotyping: Stereotypes are often applied to nationalities. A 1966 Gallup Poll found that Americans regarded the Chinese people as hardworking but ignorant, warlike, sly, and treacherous. Even if these adjectives do describe some people in China, stereotyping all the Chinese in this way is an error because there are millions of Chinese that do not fit this description. Since most stereotypes are based on impressions rather than facts, they can change quickly and radically. In 1972—only six years later—another Gallup Poll was conducted in the U.S. This poll found that the most common adjectives Americans used to describe the Chinese were: hardworking, intelligent, progressive, artistic, and honest. What might have happened between 1966 and 1972 to explain this change in Americans' image of China? Regardless of whether the stereotype involves a positive or a negative image, remember that *all* the people of a nation never have the same characteristics or personality traits.

One stereotype many Americans have of Italians is that they eat a lot of pizza. While many Italian's do often eat pizza, there are also millions of Italians that do not. In fact, in some regions of Italy, especially in the northern part of the country, pizza is rarely served. Throughout Italy, if pizza is eaten, it is almost always as an appetizer rather than as a main course. Why do you think many Americans have the stereotype that pizza is the center of many meals eaten by all Italians?

Many Americans believe that most, if not all, South Americans speak Spanish. This belief is based on inaccurate information. While many South Americans do speak Spanish, even more speak Portuguese. The national language for the majority of South Americans is Portuguese, not Spanish. Why do you think many Americans think all or nearly all South Americans speak Spanish?

Problem Two: Inaccurate Information

Often we form our images of other peoples and countries before we have carefully studied the facts. And sometimes the facts we do use are badly out-of-date. Thus, in many cases our images of other nations are not even close to reality. It is impossible to have correct up-to-date information on all the world's nations, but it is possible to be aware of the fact that the information on which our images are based may be wrong and to be ready to modify our ideas when additional information comes to light.

Example of inaccurate information: The most common image Americans have of Arabs is one of people with camels living in tents in the desert (with lots of oil beneath the ground). This image of the Arab, however, is simply not based on adequate knowledge of the facts. For centuries, most Arabs have not been desert nomads but farmers living in fertile river valleys or along the Mediterranean coast. Today, many Arabs also live in cities. Only a small percentage of Arabs (less than 4%) are desert nomads or own camels. Furthermore, most Arabs live not in countries rich with oil, but in countries that actually must import oil for economic survival.

GPE Intercom Series #106 GLOBAL EDUCATION AND INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE
...an excellent resource for developing multi-cultural awareness in preparation for hosting international visitors Peace & Global Studies Resc Exchg Service 257 7751 ext 307

Problem Three: Oversimplification

Understanding another country's culture or people is seldom as simple as it may first seem. In forming an accurate image of another country it is necessary not just to have up-to-date facts, but also to be sure that all the important facts have been taken into account. Since we do not usually know all the important facts about other nations, often our perceptions of these nations are wrong or misleading. As more information is gathered, our perception of another country or culture should become more complicated, but also more accurate.

Example of oversimplification: One common oversimplification that Americans often make is referring to the Soviet Union as "Russia" and to the inhabitants of the Soviet Union as "Russians." The reality is much more complex. Russia is only one of the 15 republics that make up the Soviet Union. In fact, only 53% of the Soviet Union's population considers itself Russian. The rest are Ukranians, Byelorussians, Uzbeks, Armenians, Lithuanians, Moldavians, Georgians, and seven other main nationalities, each with its own language and own republic.

Problem Four: Cultural Bias

Always when we look at another nation, we are looking from our own cultural perspective. What we see will reflect our own attitudes and values. This makes it difficult to judge another country or culture objectively and leads to misjudgments and misunderstandings in forming our perceptions of other nations. It is important to be aware of cultural bias and not let our own attitudes and values blind ourselves in making accurate judgments of other cultures.

Example of cultural bias: A common image Americans have of Mexicans is that they are lazy. Mexican workers generally do not spend the afternoon working, but taking a two or three hour siesta. Of course, in the U.S. a worker taking three-hour breaks every afternoon, to rest, talk, and eat would be called "lazy", but making the same judgment of a Mexican worker is not correct. Mexican workers (manual laborers, office workers, store clerks, farmers, etc.) return to work after the siesta, usually working until about 8:00 p.m.. A typical work day might be 9:00-1:00 and 4:00-8:00; in addition, most Mexican workers are also required to work on Saturday. On the average, the Mexican worker puts in more hours of work and, because machinery is not as prevalent in Mexico as in the U.S., does more physical labor than his American counterpart.

A Guide to the diverse Lebanese*
(Depicted in their distinctive native costumes)
*PROBABLY YOUR LAST CHANCE TO GET A FIRM GRIP ON WHO'S WHO IN THIS TROUBLESPOT
SHI'ITE MOSLEM MILITIAMAN
SUNNI MOSLEM MILITIAMAN
SYRIAN-BACKED LEFTIST REBEL
MARONITE CHRISTIAN
SYRIAN-BACKED DRUSE MOSLEM
DRUSE-BACKED SYRIAN REBEL
SOVIET-BACKED PALESTINIAN MOSLEM REBEL
IRANIAN-BACKED ANTI-GOVERNMENT REBEL MILITIAMAN
JORDAN-BACKED LEBANESE ARMY GEMAYEL-BACKER
ISRAELI-BACKED RIGHT-WING CHRISTIAN
SUNNI MOSLEM-BACKED SYRIAN DRUSE SHI'ITE MILITIAMAN
LEFTIST SHI'ITE-BACKED SYRIAN ANTI-GOVERNMENT DRUSE CHRISTIAN REBEL

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Often Americans view Lebanon as a country divided into two warring groups—Muslims and Christians. This oversimplifies the situation. In fact, there are many different factions of Christians and of Muslims and fighting between different groups of Christians and different groups of Muslims has been nearly as common as fighting between Muslims and Christians. What is the cartoonist trying to show in the cartoon above?

A related idea that many Americans have is that the Christians in Lebanon (which make up nearly half of Lebanon's population) are not Arabs. In fact nearly all Christians in Lebanon are also Arabs. What common stereotype of the Arabs, makes it difficult for us to conceive of some Lebanese Christians as Arabs?